

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATION  
AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**March 19, 2013**

The Honorable,  
The Board of Commissioners of Cook County

**ATTENDANCE**

Present: Chairman Suffredin, Vice Chairman Fritchey, Commissioners Collins, Dale, Gainer, Gorman, Murphy, Reyes, Schneider, Silvestri, Sims and Steele (12)

Absent: Commissioners Beavers, Butler, Gorman, Goslin and Tobolski (5)

Also Present: Dr. Donna Alexander – Administrator, Cook County Animal Control; Stanley D. Gehrt – Associate Professor, Ohio State University School of Environment and Natural Resources, College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences; David De Funiak – Executive Director, Tree House Humane Society; Rochelle Michalek – Executive Director, PAWS Chicago

Court Reporter: Anthony W. Lisanti, C.S.R

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Your Committee on Legislation and Intergovernmental Relations of the Board of Commissioners of Cook County met pursuant to notice on Tuesday, March 19, 2013 at the hour of 11:30 A.M. for a public hearing in the Board Room, Room 569, County Building, 118 North Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois.

Your Committee has considered the following item and, upon adoption of this report, the recommendation is as follows:

321831 REQUESTING A HEARING OF THE LEGISLATION AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS FERAL CAT MANAGEMENT (PROPOSED RESOLUTION). Submitting a Proposed Resolution sponsored by Larry Suffredin, County Commissioner.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

**REQUESTING A HEARING OF THE LEGISLATION  
AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
TO DISCUSS FERAL CAT MANAGEMENT**

**WHEREAS**, it is estimated that more than one million feral cats live in Cook County, Illinois; and

**WHEREAS**, feral cats have a deleterious impact on the environment, as they are introduced predators who prey upon species native to Cook County; and

**WHEREAS**, in response to the influx of feral cats, various measures have been introduced within Cook County to stem the cats' population; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2007, the Cook County Board of Commissioners adopted the Managed Care of Feral Cats Ordinance, Section 10-95 *et. al.* of the Cook County Code, which permitted the establishment of feral cat colonies within Cook County and allowed the Department of Animal and Rabies Control ("the Department") to humanely trap feral cats in order to protect the public safety and health; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department has actively been enforcing the ordinance and working with a variety of governmental bodies and agencies to track the effectiveness of their efforts.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners does hereby request that a public hearing of the Legislation and Intergovernmental Relations Committee be convened to discuss the managed care of Cook County's feral cat populations; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that Dr. Donna Alexander, Administrator of the Department of Animal and Rabies Control, appear before the Committee and be prepared to update the Committee on the Department's activities and the effect of those activities on the feral cat population.

**\*Referred to the Legislation and Intergovernmental Relations Committee on 02-05-13.**

Stanley D. Gehrt, Associate Professor, Ohio State University School of Environment and Natural Resources, College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, delivered a slide presentation. (Attachment #1)

David De Funiak, Executive Director, Tree House Humane Society and Rochelle Michalek, Executive Director, PAWS Chicago, delivered a slide presentation. (Attachment #2)

Chairman Suffredin asked the Secretary to the Board to call upon the registered public speakers, in accordance with Cook County Code, Sec. 2-107(dd).

1. Louise Clemency – Director of Chicago Region, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
2. Donnie Dann – Chicago Wilderness
3. Janine A. Dust – Cat Caretaker
4. Collette Walker – Board Member and Secretary – Triple R Pets
5. George Blakemore – Concerned Citizen
6. Ann-Marie Shapiro – Concerned Citizen
7. Judy Pollock – Audubon Society, Chicago Region
8. Maureen Headington – Concerned Citizen
9. Mary Ann Paskuly – Concerned Citizen
10. Valerie Chalcraft – Concerned Citizen
11. Robert Morrison – Fetal Feline Project
12. Ruth Hooper – Foster, Triple R Pets
13. Bruno Passigatti – Concerned Citizen
14. Renea Burman – Spay Neuter Illinois Pets
15. Jill Niland – Past President, Chicago Ornithological Society
16. Thomas Hay Bauer – Concerned Citizen
17. Jenny Schlueter – Director of Development, Community
18. Nau Jhaj – Attorney at Law
19. Elvia Rodriguez – Concerned Citizen
20. Leslie Summer – Concerned Citizen
21. Jodie Wiederkehr – Concerned Citizen
22. Ellen Miles – Catvando
23. Che Nadel – Hyde Park Cats

**Commissioner Daley, seconded by Commissioner Murphy, moved the Approval of Communication No. 321831. The motion carried.**

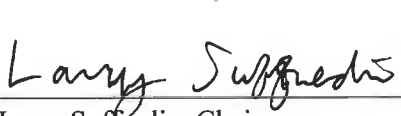
Commissioner Silvestri moved to Adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Daley. The motion carried and the meeting was Adjourned.

**YOUR COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING ACTION  
WITH REGARD TO THE MATTER NAMED HEREIN:**

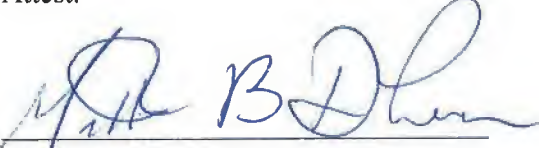
Communication Number 321831      Receive and File

Respectfully submitted,

Committee on Legislation and  
Intergovernmental Relations

 - Bm  
Larry Suffredin, Chairman

Attest:

  
Matthew B. DeLeon, Secretary

\*A video recording of this meeting is available on the Office of the Secretary to the Board's website on the Video Page at <http://blog.cookcountyil.gov/secretarytotheboard/county-board-proceedings/county-board-video-and-audio/>

# Urban Ecology of Free-Ranging Cats

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## COOK COUNTY ANIMAL AND RABIES ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH PROGRAM



**Stanley D. Gehrt**

**The Ohio State University**

**Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation**



We have conducted 2 studies that focus on aspects of free-ranging cats

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- Study I: Population ecology of cats in Cook County natural areas
  - Describe demography, physical condition
  - Survival, mortality causes
  - Disease
  - Movements
  - Relationship with coyotes



# Study I: Methods

- Livetrapped free-ranging cats within urban parks, 2008-2009
- Recorded morphometrics, collected blood samples
- Radiotracked cats, estimated survival and home range size
- Necropsies performed by U of I
- Monitored coyotes as part of a long-term project



# Results

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- ▣ Captured 43 cats, radiocollared 39
- ▣ Radiotracking March 2008-April 2010
- ▣ Recorded >3,000 locations





# Results

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## □ Demography

- Adult females: 18
- Adult males: 19
- Juveniles: 2 F, 3 M

## □ Reproductive status:

- Adult males: 28% neutered
- Adult females: 25% spayed



## Fates of Free-ranging Cats (n=42)

Fate	N	Percent
Dead	10	24%
Abducted	10	24%
Adopted or Removed	10	24%
Missing	2	3%
Tx Expired	6	14%
Monitoring	4	10%

# Annual Survival Estimates for Mesocarnivores in the Chicago Area

Species	S
Cat	0.73
Gray fox	0.62
Striped Skunk	0.41-0.51
Raccoon	0.57-0.88
Coyote	0.58-0.70

# Serology of free-ranging domestic cats during 2008-2010

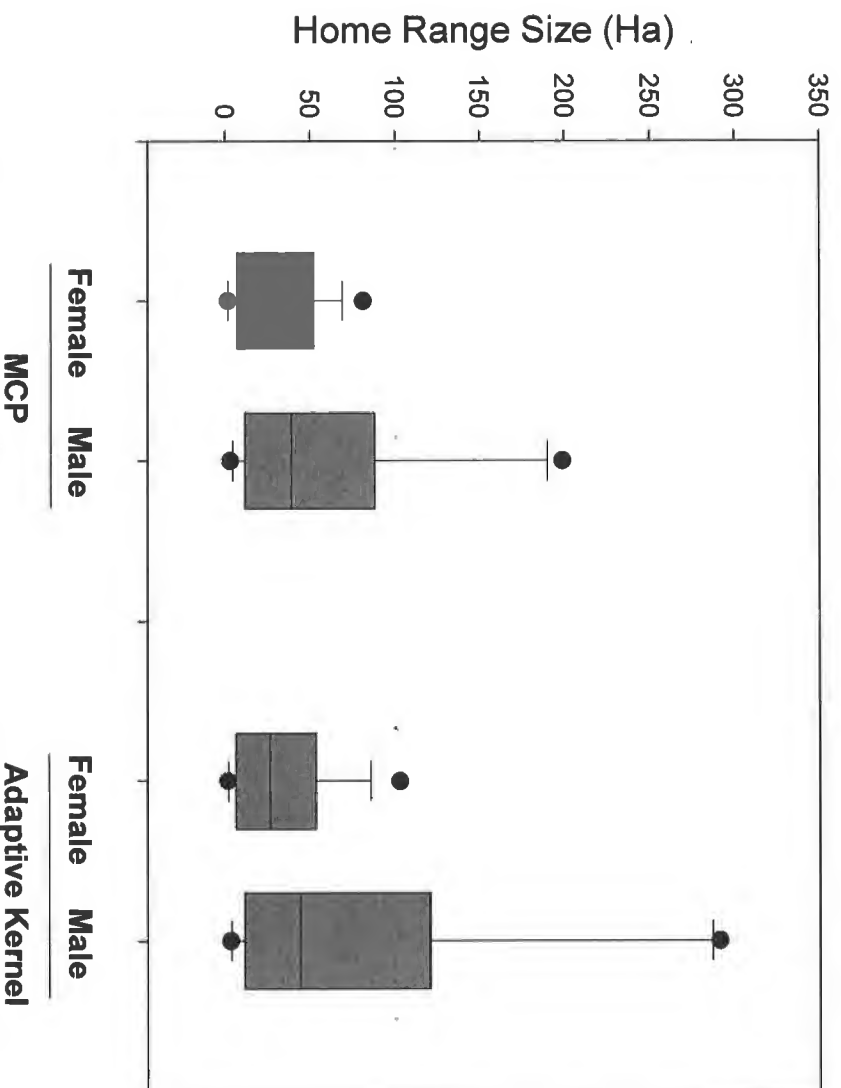
Pathogen	2008-09	
	n	% Positive
Toxoplasmosis	-	
	Igg	53 43%
	Igm	53 2%
FelV	53	0%
FIV	53	2%
Heartworm	53	8%

## Prevalence of *Toxoplasmosis gondii* for native mesocarnivores in the Chicago area, 2000-2006

Species	n	% Positive
Raccoon	519	37 (7-68)
Skunk	82	60
Coyote	119	63



# Annual Home Range Estimates, 2008-2009



Female: 81 acres

Male: 165 acres

No differences:

Sex

Condition

Reproduction



# Cat and Coyote Habitat Selection

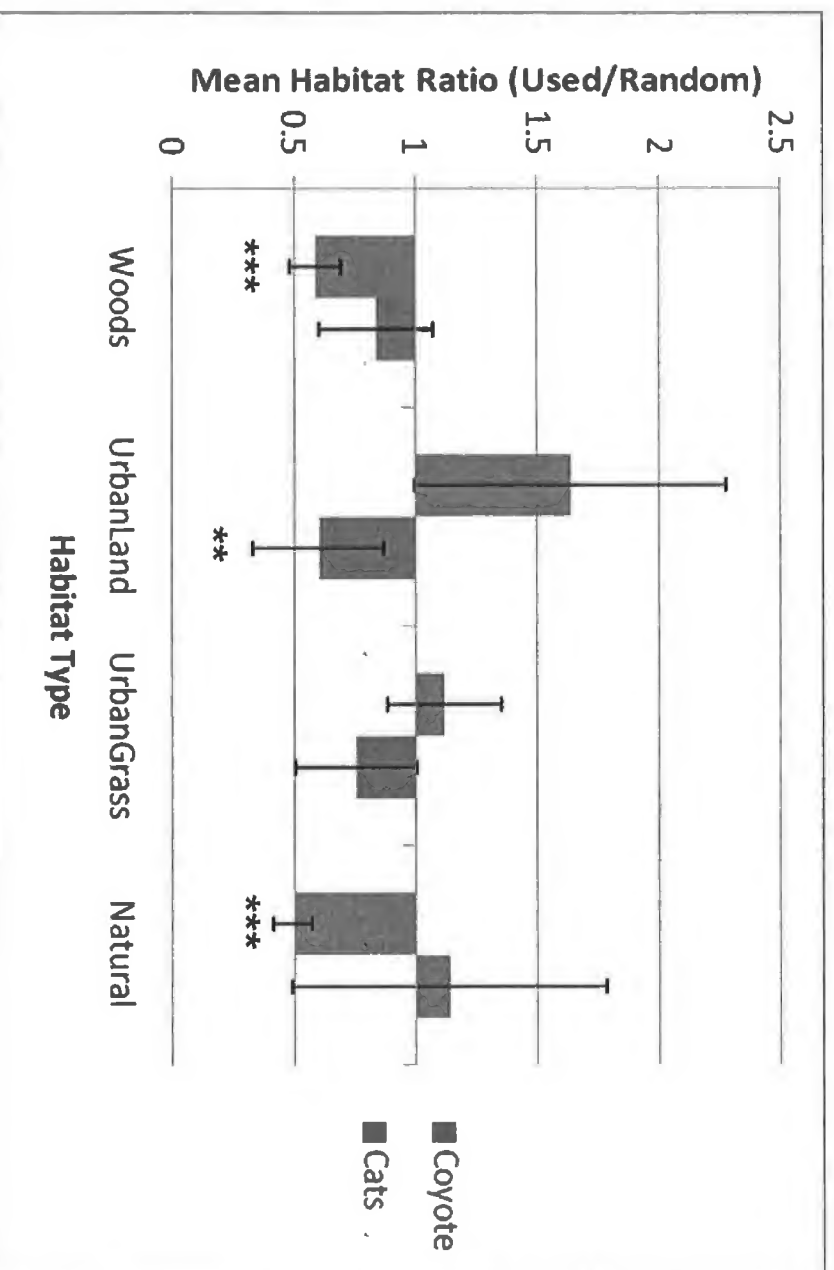
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Seventeen coyotes  
were monitored  
concurrently with,  
and used the same  
sites, with 13 cats  
during our study





# Habitat Selection: Cats vs Coyotes



\*\*\*  $P < 0.001$

\*\*  $P < 0.01$

Selection ratios are the ratio of the distance to habitat type for observed locations/random locations. Ratios  $< 1$  indicate selection for the habitat, and  $> 1$  avoidance.

# **Cook County Managed Care of Feral Cats Ordinance Sponsors Update**

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## **Presenting:**

**David de Funiak**

**Executive Director**

**Tree House Humane Society**

**Rochelle Michalek**

**Executive Director**

**PAWS Chicago**

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**This Presentation is a result of the collaborative efforts of:**

**Triple R Pets – Judy Clark, Collette Walker**

**Tree House – Jennifer Schlueter, Kari Johnson**

**PAWS Chicago – Kinga Mucha**

**Anti Cruelty Society – David Dinger**



# Services Offered by Sponsoring Agencies at No Cost to Cook County

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- **Clinic & Medical Services** – Spay/neuter surgery, Rabies Vaccinations, Parasite Treatment, and Micro Chipping.
- **Education/Training/Counseling**
- **Trap Lending**
- **Hands-on Trapping Services**
- **Transportation Services**
- **Recovery Space**
- **Rehoming through Adoption and Relocation**
- **Food Distribution**



## Managed Cat Colonies Sponsorship

Sponsor	# Colonies	Current # of Cats	# S/N	# Micro Chipped	# Vaccinated	# Cats / Kittens Rehomed	# Zip Codes
Tree House	333	2,160	3,881	2,592	2,566	1,820	73
PAWS Chicago	316	2,140	2,249	2,022	2,212	187	56
Triple RRR	406	2,740	2,655	2,737	2,737	619	75
Total	1,055	7,040	8,785	7,351	7,515	2,626	

*Private, Not-for-Profit Agencies in cooperation with local communities are working together to provide a humane solution to managing feral cat colonies. This effort is 100% funded by the private community.*

*County, City, and Local Resources can be utilized to provide alternative services to their community.*

## Pro-Active Population Management through Access to Spay / Neuter

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### Feral Cat – Spay / Neuter Surgeries

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	Total
Anti Cruelty	333	820	817	775	729	3,474
PAWS Chicago	3,080	3,499	3,972	3,730	2,800	17,081
Tree House	2,031	2,280	2,080	1,061	119	7,571
Total Surgery	5,444	6,599	6,869	5,566	3,648	28,126

### Feral Cat – Cook County - Spay / Neuter Surgeries

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	Total
Anti Cruelty	249	615	613	582	547	2,606
PAWS Chicago	1,530	1,532	1,892	1,820	1,638	8,412
Tree House	1,747	1,960	1,789	913	111	6,520
Total Surgery	3,526	4,107	4,294	3,315	2,296	17,538

*Since 2008, over 17,538 feral cats have been sterilized in Cook County. More than 50% are Females - At 2 litters a year / averaging 3 kittens per litter. This has prevented the birth of over Tens of Thousands of kittens—Conservatively.*

## Public Health Impact - Rabies Prevention through Vaccinations.

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*The “Not for Profit” Clinics recognize the importance of Rabies Prevention- Ferals are vaccinated for rabies as part of the standard medical protocol.*

# Medical Services Provided by “Not for Profit” Clinics for Feral Cats

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## Tree House Humane Society

- Spay / Neuter – Free!
- \$20 – Ear-tip, Rabies & Distemper Vaccination, Parasite Treatment, pain medicine.
- Additional Services – Micro Chip, Parasite Treatment, Feline Combo Testing.

## The Anti-Cruelty Society–Feral Cat Program

- Spay / Neuter & Ear Tip & Flea Treatment– Free!
- Additional Services – Vaccines, Micro Chips, Feline Combo Tests.

\*\*\* *Medical Services Pricing & Service Offering Subject to Change.*

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## Colony Size Decreases Over Time

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# of Zip Codes	Starting # Cats	Ending # of Cats	Rehomed	Reduction In Colony	Impact
23	1,329	788	416	125	-541

*Looking at 23 Zip Codes in which there are stabilized Colonies, we have seen a 41% Reduction in the Number of Cats in the Colony.*

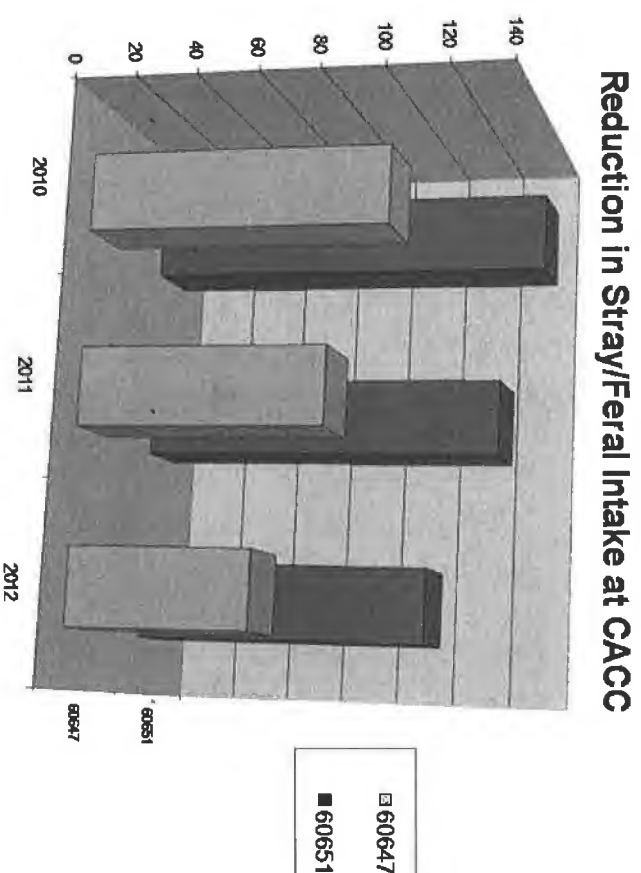




# The Benefits of Targeted TNR Projects

In 2011, Tree House began a project in the 60651 and 60647 neighborhoods. 1,500 cats have been sterilized and vaccinated, and the results of the project have been significant.

- **Reduction in stray relinquishments:** The number of stray or feral cats relinquished to Chicago Animal Care & Control has been reduced by 30% in 60651, and 40% in 60647.
- **Reduction in feral population:** Of the 1500 cats sterilized, 345 cats and kittens were adopted through our network, representing a 23% reduction in the original population.
- **Community Involvement:** The project generated an 81% increase in the amount of registered caretakers, and a 500% increase in the amount of people bringing cats into our clinic for free services.
- **Significant Cost Savings:** The obvious benefits of community involvement and the investment of private organizations like Tree House is the significant cost savings to the City and County.



## **Major Initiatives – Local Support**

### **TNR Agreements with Local Municipality Administration & Police**

- La Grange/Countryside (TNR 184) & Oak Forest ( TNR 311) - MOU's (Triple R Pets)
- Willow Springs/Justice (TNR 167) & Tinley Park (TNR 85)– Informal Agreements (Triple R Pets)

### **Projects with Local Support**

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### **Animal Care & Control / Intake Facilities**

- Inquiries & Complaints are directed to Sponsoring Organizations
- Ear Tipped Cats that are brought into the shelter are retrieved by a Sponsoring Organization
- Feral Cats are updated on Vaccinations, Returned to Colony, or Relocated

# Cook County Managed Care of Feral Cats Ordinance

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## The Key Benefits as a Result of the Ordinance are:

### Collaboration

- Established resources to pro-actively work within the local community to prevent or resolve neighborhood concerns.
- Created a community of partnerships within animal welfare that leverages organizational competencies & strengths.
- Feral Cats are Returned to Colonies

### Communication

- Widely available, easily accessible, accurate, and consistent information on feral cats to the general public.
- Pro-active educational programs on Feral Cat Colony Management & Sponsorship.
- Dramatically increases the number of resources that support the community.

### Prevention

- Spay / Neuter is pro-active population management – resulting in dramatically decreased kitten intake to Animal Care & Control Agencies.
- Public Health - Rabies prevention through pro-active vaccinations.

## **Cook County Managed Care of Feral Cats Ordinance**

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***The Ordinance enables Pro-active Responsible  
Management of Feral Cat Population in Cook County.  
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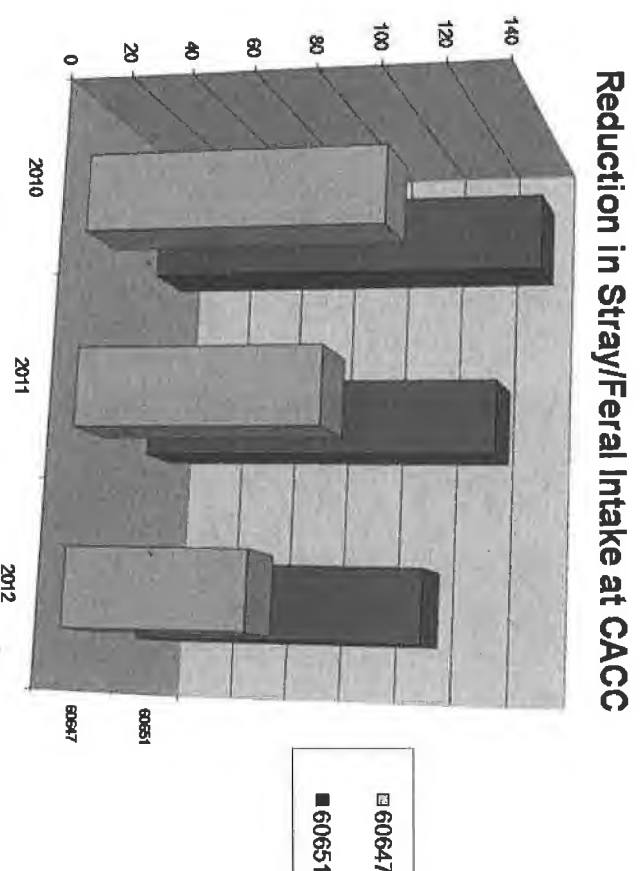
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